

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary organizations (including in particular companies) in order to maintain market competitiveness have to take numerous actions which can be assigned to two categories: 1) competing and 2) cooperating. Parallel competition and cooperation can be regarded as an element of current paradigm in management sciences.

The present publication includes an analysis of selected activities of organizations oriented towards competition or cooperation.

The work starts with a paper on analysis of connections between implementation of CSR practices and competitiveness of an organization on the B2B market. The text illustrates CSR practices as a tool for managing relations between organizations and their suppliers. It also contains an exemplification of applying CSR practices by Arcelor Mittal in its relations with suppliers.

The next paper continues the theme of CSR. In this case, the focus is on the description of actions implemented in this area by companies of Polish energy sector. The text exposes the specifics of CSR in this sector with special regard to the stakeholders of energy enterprises.

The third text completes the preceding one discussed above. This time, description covers consumer opinions concerning CSR practices applied by companies of the energy sector. The authors verified the efficiency of these practices from the perspective of their social reception and provided utilitarian conclusions which allow to improve the mentioned practices in the future.

The fourth writing focuses on the subject of applying kaizen as a tool for improving competitiveness of suppliers. The text comprises both deliberations on the present status of kaizen in literature and an overview of current kaizen research streams with a case study of implementing kaizen as a tool for improving competitiveness of supplier in relation with recipient. Therefore, the paper presents a new application of the well-known management tool.

The fifth text deliberates on competitive and cooperative activities of companies online. On the basis of intentionally selected group of scientific

articles the authors have indicated the leading research problems in the above stated field undertaken by Polish researchers.

The subsequent text defines brand and its competitiveness. Brand is here regarded as a tool for shaping company value, while its competitiveness is considered as a fundamental determinant of company competitiveness. The writing includes results of empirical studies of competitiveness of selected Polish jewellery brands.

The importance of packaging of confectionery products has been analysed in the seventh text. The role and the function of the packaging have been shown from the point of view of selected marketing concepts. Furthermore, results of research on Polish students' preferences of packaging used in chocolate production have been presented. Findings thus obtained may serve as feedback for managements of companies – chocolate producers.

The eighth text is dedicated to the very interesting issue of restructuring of organizations at risk of bankruptcy. From among the analyzed restructuring activities those of cooperational attitude towards stakeholders have been exposed. Consequentially, restructuring carried out in a crisis situation appears as a key factor of potential countermeasure of enterprise liquidation and creates a prospect for future consideration of its competitiveness.

The following text, the ninth, opens a collection dedicated to human factor in organization. It comprises reflection on competition and cooperation from the perspective of behavioural stream of management sciences. Discussion tackles among others mechanisms of competition and cooperation, relation between these two phenomena, organizational contexts and conditions for co-existence of competition and cooperation.

The tenth text introduces analysis of mutual dependencies between competition-oriented profile of an organizational culture and creating along with development of workaholism. In this article workaholism is regarded as pathology with numerous negative consequences, both organizational and individual. Yet, organizational culture oriented towards competition seems to favour the phenomenon of workaholism.

The eleventh text deals with the subject of presence and importance of competition and cooperation as individual and organizational elements of value systems. The article includes diagnosis of “stratification” of the indicated value systems which is based on studies of selected managers. Moreover, this part comprises also deliberations on relations between competition and cooperation in these systems.

Finally, the last, twelfth, text focuses on the absorbing phenomenon of glass ceilings which is presented as a significant competitiveness barrier for women in workplace. Empirical studies carried out in academic environment have supported this depressing thesis that unluckily women in their

careers face glass ceiling which significantly impedes their promotion at universities.

The above short introduction to the content of individual parts of the book indicates that the subject of competitiveness and cooperation in present day management creates a very abundant and versatile space both from the perspective of real life and the subject along with methodology of scientific understanding.

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